

December 2007
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Soldiers

The Official U.S. Army

STEVENS

U.S. ARMY

G.I.
JILL

Sgt. Jill Stevens

MISS UTAH

TP36

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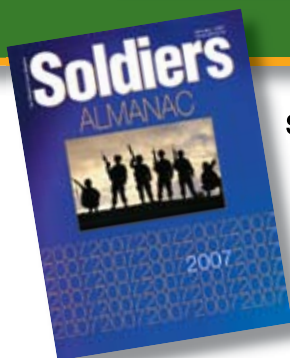
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Soldiers magazine is distributed based on unit commanders' requirements. Commanders and publications officers can order Soldiers through the Army Publishing Directorate at <http://docs.usapa.belvoir.army.mil/ordering/store.asp>.

To start or change your unit subscription, enter the **Initial Distribution Number (IDN) 050007**.



Soldiers The Official U.S. Army Magazine

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Printing: Gateway Press, Inc., Louisville, Ky.

Soldiers (ISSN 0093-8440) is published monthly by the Army Chief of Public Affairs to provide information on people, policies, operations, technical developments, trends and ideas of and about the Department of the Army. The views and opinions expressed are not necessarily those of the Department of the Army.

Send submissions and correspondence to Editor, Soldiers Magazine, Soldiers Media Center, Box 31, 2511 Jefferson Davis Hwy., Arlington, VA 22202-3900. Phone: (703) 602-8164, or send e-mail to soldiers.magazine@smc.army.mil.

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The Secretary of the Army has determined that the publication of this periodical is necessary in the transaction of the public business as required by law of the department. Funds for printing this publication were approved by the Secretary of the Army in accordance with the provisions of Army Regulation 25-30. Library of Congress call number: U1.A827.

Periodicals postage paid at Fort Belvoir, VA, and additional mailing offices.

Individual subscriptions: Subscriptions can be purchased through the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, DC 20402.

GPO U.S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE : 2005—310-065/600056

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to the Arlington address above.

Soldiers

Recipient of Awards of Magazine Excellence



Thomas Jefferson Awards
Outstanding Flagship
Publication 2004 - 2006



NAGC Blue Pencil
Competition
2004



Thomas Jefferson Awards
Outstanding Flagship Writer
2005
Beth Ann Reece



Mail Call

Sad Sack

THE November story "Remembering Sad Sack," was very well done, though I have to admit that before reading the article I had never heard of Sad Sack.

It seems to me that today's Army could use a signature cartoon character, since it seems like a good way to point out both the hassles and high points of Army life in a funny and informative way.

Keep up the good work.

1st Lt. R.J. Stiles
via e-mail

AS a retiree who's far older than he cares to remember, I want to congratulate you on the excellent Sad Sack story in the November issue.

I can remember reading Sad Sack comics in Yank during the war, and then in civilian comic books later on. Sad Sack gave a voice to enlisted guys like me, and Sgt. George Baker was able to "tell it like it is" in a way that was acceptable to the brass because it was humorous.

Your article was a great stroll down memory lane.

John R. Laurent
Monroeville, Pa.

IED Training

YOUR November article "Training to Defeat IEDs" was interesting, and I'm glad to hear that lessons learned in Iraq and Afghanistan are being incorporated into counter-IED training scenarios.

I think we all realize that IEDs are a terrible effective weapon, and the more we can teach

our Soldiers about how to detect and counter them, the fewer casualties we'll have.

I will say (from personal experience) that no matter how realistic IED training is, it absolutely can't prepare you for being the target of a real IED. The good news is that if the training has been good, when the real thing explodes you'll survive because the reactions are automatic.

Name withheld by request
via e-mail

Xbox Army

GREAT cover on the October issue! The Army hit on a brilliant marketing ploy when it developed the first version of "America's Army." That game is well done, informative and, most important, fun to play, and I assume that "True Soldiers" will be even better.

My only problem with the article is that it said the game was going to be released, and as far as I know it still wasn't out by late October. What gives?

Name withheld by request
via e-mail

WE are aware that the game's developer, Red Storm Entertainment, has delayed release until sometime this fall. For more information, visit www.americasarmy.com.

Doggie Eyewear?

I ENJOYED the November issue, though I do have a question about one of the photos in the "On Point" department.

In the photo in the upper-right corner of page 27 there's a dog being fitted with a hoist collar. My question is this: Is the dog actually wearing some kind of protective eyewear, or does the photographer just have a twisted sense of humor?

I would think that protective eyewear might be a good idea for any canine about to go on an involuntary hoist ride, but I also know that Soldiers aren't above dressing up their working dogs with a little off-the-wall apparel.

Sgt. Jimmie Allison
via e-mail

WHILE we like to think of ourselves as incredibly knowledgeable about all things Army, we have to admit that this is a new one for us. We assume that the dog's goggles are necessary and official, but we'd be interested in hearing from somebody who knows for sure.

Korea Changes

I WAS glad to see the October story about the changes at Camp Humphreys, Korea. I think anyone who served there in the old days (meaning up to about two years ago) would agree that positive changes in housing and other quality-of-life issues was long overdue.

Congratulations to the Army for keeping Soldier welfare on the front burner.

William Ekstrom
via e-mail

Soldiers Values Your Opinion

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G.I. JILL

Story by Ms. Beth Reece

Sgt. Jill Stevens

EVERYTHING about Sgt. Jill Stevens — from her tomboyish childhood to her year in a war zone — says “one of the guys” rather than beauty queen.

But the combat medic has dazzled pageant judges, who unanimously named her Miss Utah last June and guaranteed her a shot at the title “Miss America 2008.”

“I’ve never seen anyone with more natural poise or with such a gift for connecting with people. She has so much to offer in terms of service; she’s a natural leader,” said Ms. Shar-

lene Wells-Hawkes, a former Miss America and recent judge.

She turns Soldiers’ heads, too. “She’s an all-around amazing girl, the type of person who’s going to make a difference in people’s lives,” said retired Sgt. 1st Class Lee Porter. While serving with her in Afghanistan, the NCO predicted Sgt. Stevens would one day be Miss America — a year before she ever considered entering a pageant.

The Beauty Queen

A member of the Utah National

Guard’s 1st Battalion, 211th Aviation Regiment, Sgt. Stevens had just started nursing school at Southern Utah University in the fall of 2005 when the school’s pageant director recruited her to run for Miss SUU.

“I was like, ‘Yeah, right.’ I wear combat boots; I don’t do heels. To me, pageants were about girls waving their hands and looking pretty. I didn’t want to be associated with that,” she said.

“But then he told me that these girls move people to action, that they really make a difference,” Sgt. Stevens said. “He believed in the organization and how it changed girls’ lives. I thought, ‘that’s cool.’ It was my light-bulb moment.”

The chance to serve and help others — much like she does in uniform — through politics and community, steered Sgt. Stevens in a direction neither she nor her family thought likely.

“We tried to talk her out of it,” said Sgt. Stevens’ mom, Karen. “I was of the same mind that she was, that pageantry was all foo foo and fluff. I didn’t know about the service goals of the organization, or about the scholarships.”

Sgt. Stevens appeared at her first pageant workshop wearing sweaty



◀ While in Afghanistan in 2004-2005, Sgt. Jill Stevens — a member of the Utah Army National Guard — used games of tag and songs to connect with local children.



Sgt. Stevens was named Miss Southern Utah University and second runner-up in the 2006 Miss Utah pageant. Now Miss Utah 2007, she will compete for the Miss America crown Jan. 26 in Las Vegas, Nev.

Sgt. Maj. Phil Prater



gym clothes and a ball cap. One look at the other girls, all sporting “professionals” — her term for business attire — and she almost ducked out. “I didn’t know a thing about that side of the world,” she said.

Learning to walk became Sgt. Stevens’ first crash course on “womanhood.”

“I had to ask my college roommate where to buy high heels to practice in,” she said. Next came losing what she called her “Soldier strut,” where she dipped her shoulders with each step.

For her talent display, Sgt. Stevens considered taking apart and reassembling her M-16 rifle.

“You get two minutes to do your talent, and at boot camp you’re trained to take it apart and put it back together in two minutes. So I thought that might work as my talent. Then I realized it probably wasn’t a very smart idea,” she said.

Instead, she chose a monologue to show her gift for making others laugh.

Sgt. Stevens won Miss SUU and went on to become second runner-up in the 2006 Miss Utah pageant.

“At that point I was done,” she said. “I had learned so much about myself, and it was great that, as a Soldier, I’d made it so far.” But friends urged her to go for the crown.

“I knew Jill could win. She’s so multifaceted, and many of the girls are one-dimensional,” said Ms. Wells-Hawkes. “Her whole life story sets her apart from others. She’s a renaiss-

◀ As a medic assigned to Bagram Air Base in 2004 and 2005, Sgt. Stevens flew to Jegdalek to provide medical assistance to Afghan villagers.

► Sgt. Stevens stays true to her modest taste in competition gowns by having the dresses custom made without thin “spaghetti” shoulder straps.

sance woman.”

As Miss Utah 2007, Sgt. Stevens travels the state and across America to spread the word on emergency preparedness, a subject that caught her attention in Afghanistan. She also gives motivational talks to students about her slogan, “Lock and Load,” which she translates to “Be ready for anything and make every moment count.”

In October she went to Washington, D.C., to visit Soldiers at Walter Reed Army Medical Center and run the Marine Corps Marathon. And while she considers herself the least talented in a musically gifted family — her mother sings with the Mormon Tabernacle Choir — she’s sung the national anthem at football-game openings.

“Now that I’m Miss Utah, I want to get out on a national level to show that I can be Miss America, not just have the judges picture it by what I’m doing here at home,” she said.

The Army National Guard has taken advantage of Sgt. Stevens’ rapport with young women and made her a hometown recruiter, an assignment in which she shares her Army experiences with those looking for a glimpse of “real” Army life. She has so far encouraged four young women to join.

The divide between Soldier and beauty queen, beret and tiara, evening gown and Army combat uniform, is not so vast to Sgt. Stevens.

“To me, they go hand in hand.



The military wants people to get an education, to be fit and, above all, to serve. It’s the same with Miss America. They also want you to be educated; they also promote fitness; and the biggest part is service. Both teach you to be leaders.”

Which title best suits her?

“Oh, definitely the Soldier,” she said.

The Soldier

Sgt. Stevens joined the Army Na-

tional Guard six months before 9/11 for the same cliché reasons depicted in commercials: adventure, challenge and benefits.

Two years later, while driving home from college to spend Thanksgiving with her family, she got the call. “Pack your bags,” her section sergeant said. “You’re going to Afghanistan.”

“I’d just been accepted into nursing school, and I was engaged to someone at the time. Everything

The divide between Soldier and beauty queen, beret and tiara, evening gown and Army combat uniform, is not so vast to Sgt. Stevens.



changed completely,” she said.

Stationed at Bagram Air Base from 2004 to 2005, Sgt. Stevens worked in the aid station, patching up anywhere from 10 to 40 Soldiers a day. Her unit also provided medical aid and supplies to locals. In the villages, Sgt. Stevens used games of tag and songs to connect with the children.

On a humanitarian mission in Jegdalek, Sgt. Stevens met five-year-old Halima, a girl with crossed eyes and impaired vision. Sgt. Stevens and fellow Soldiers arranged to have American doctors fix Halima’s eyes. During the week of the girl’s surgery Sgt. Stevens played the big sister. She showed Halima American cartoons, dressed her up, taught her to brush her teeth and fed her french fries from

▲ While helping to provide medical assistance to villagers in Jegdalek, Sgt. Stevens befriended five-year-old Halima, a girl with crossed eyes and impaired vision.

► Later, after surgery performed by American doctors corrected her eye problems, Halima poses for a farewell photo as Sgt. Stevens prepares to leave Afghanistan.



The Pageant

SGT. Jill Stevens won't be the lone Soldier at January's Miss America pageant. Those she's served with in Afghanistan will also be present to cheer on one of their own. About 30 Soldiers will attend the event with families, according to Maj. Hank McIntire, Utah National Guard public affairs officer.

"It will help remind the audience and viewers of the versatility of one of the contestants, and help us remember the service and sacrifice Soldiers made on behalf of the country," he said.

Having a Soldier in the Miss America competition, he added, shows possible recruits they can accomplish anything in the military.

In fact, "I think part of what makes Sgt. Stevens such a strong candidate is her combat experience. She also personifies every aspect of what you'd look for in an ideal Miss America," he said. "She's a trend setter."

As for Sgt. Stevens' skills as a Soldier, Maj. McIntire said he agrees with comments made by Maj. Gen. Brian Tarbet, adjutant general for the Utah National Guard: "Obviously she is bright and attractive, but most important, she's a terrific Soldier." — *Beth Reece*

a Burger King kiosk on base.

"My purpose was to show her how we Americans lived, that women really can do things," she said. "We'll see a difference in Afghanistan when these kids grow into adults. They will make it happen when they're older, and I think Halima will be a part of that."

Although Sgt. Stevens' unit expected to return to Jegdalek a few weeks after Halima's surgery, other missions prevailed and five months passed before what became Sgt. Stevens' final visit to the village.

"As soon as I walked off the landing zone and into the village, the kids were yelling, 'Jill, Jill.' It was music to my ears," she said. "I was so afraid

they would forget who I was and all the things I'd taught them."

The kids busied her with games, and two hours passed with no sign of Halima.

As Sgt. Stevens prepared to head back to the landing zone, the kids whispered, "Halima, Halima," and suddenly the crowd parted.

"Halima came running straight for

me, arms wide open with the biggest grin on her face. We did one of those swoop-around hugs, and that right there was truly the happiest moment of my life," she said. "I didn't care that I had to drop out of school, that I had to give up so many things to be there. It made every sacrifice worth it."

Flying away from Jegdalek for the last time, Sgt. Stevens wondered if the locals she'd helped understood that she and her fellow Soldiers would soon be heading home to Utah. Her commander, who was sitting next to her, motioned for her to look down.

▼ Sgt. Stevens and Chief Warrant Officer Layne Pace depart from their final trip to Jegdalek. From the air, they watched locals wave the American flag, which Sgt. Stevens said also now represents freedom in Afghanistan.



Stationed at Bagram Air Base's aid station from 2004 to 2005, Sgt. Stevens patched up from 10 to 40 Soldiers a day.



▲ While deployed, Sgt. Stevens was the first woman to cross the finish line in what the Afghan National Olympic Committee claimed to be the country's first marathon.

"We looked out and there was our flag, which represents the sacrifice of so many we'd served with, and those before us," she said. "Now it represents their freedom. I couldn't have been more proud to be an American Soldier."

While deployed, Sgt. Stevens was the first woman to cross the finish line in what the Afghan National Olympic Committee claimed to be the country's first marathon. She remembers the 26.2-mile race along rocky, landmine-littered terrain as "painful and slow."

"As I was running I realized that there I was, a woman running in a country where women are oppressed. Suddenly I became proud, because I am an American woman fighting to help these women," she said. "Those thoughts took me to the finish line — I did it for them."

After six and a half years in the service, Sgt. Stevens can't imagine cutting her ties with the Army. "It's so a part of my life right now. There's a

part of me that can see going 20 years."

The Woman

Being Miss Utah hasn't always felt natural to Sgt. Stevens. Standing onstage alongside "stunning, elegant women" and receiving beauty advice from pushy well-wishers has led her to some introspection and self-doubt, she admitted.

"I'm not the most talented or most intelligent. I didn't get an academic scholarship, and I'm not the most graceful walker or best model," she said. "There have been hard times when I've thought I should walk like someone else or be other than what I am. But I've come to realize it's okay to just be me."

For Sgt. Stevens, being true to herself entails a modesty that other pageant participants — and judges — eye questioningly. She refuses to



▲ Sgt. Stevens — a self-described "tomboy" — says that participating in pageants has helped her discover her feminine side.

budge from a one-piece swimsuit, for example, and so clean is her taste in evening gowns that they've all been custom made — none of them sleeveless or with "spaghetti" straps.

"I don't want to showcase my body in a way that makes me an object," she said. "Again, I want to

No one is better prepared for the national spotlight than Sgt. Stevens, said Ms. Wells-Hawkes, who can easily see the young woman ably representing her generation of women worldwide.

be myself, not just a part of the mold. Maybe that's what helps me to stand out, that I can wear something different and still be beautiful."

While Sgt. Stevens' mother believes the Army suits her daughter better than pageantry, she said she's proud to see the woman it's helped Sgt. Stevens become.

"We definitely see more of the feminine touch in her, and I'm not sure that was something she ever aspired to before," her mother said.

▼ Sgt. Stevens has been a fitness fanatic since the fifth grade, when she woke up at 5:30 a.m. to do Richard Simmons' "Sweatin' to the Oldies" with her mom, Karen.

"And for all that the pageantry has given to Jill, I think has even more to return.

"The fact that she's not your average beauty queen who has been doing this her whole life ... shows other girls that they can be an athlete, a tomboy, a Soldier, and also do great things," she said.

No one is better prepared for the national spotlight than Sgt. Stevens, said Ms. Well-Hawkes, who can easily see the young Soldier ably representing her generation of women worldwide.

"Miss America is an individual who is ready and willing to serve oth-

ers. The fact that she's been willing to go abroad and put herself in harm's way says she's willing to do what it takes to make a difference," she said. "Jill is exactly the person we want to represent our country." ❧



The Miss America pageant will be broadcast live Jan. 26 on TLC from the Aladdin Resort and Casino in Las Vegas, Nev.



Rainier Rescuers

Story and Photos by Mr. Steve Harding





At 8,000 feet up the western face of Washington state's 14,400-foot Mount Rainier, National Park Service climbing ranger Mr. Andy Anderson awaits the arrival of a CH-47 Chinook of the Fort Lewis-based Company A, 5th Battalion, 159th Aviation Regiment.

MOST of the 6,000 to 8,000 climbers who each year attempt to scale Washington's Mount Rainier walk off the long-dormant volcano under their own power. For the unfortunate few who can't — either because of injury or incapacitation — the trip down is often courtesy of an Army Reserve CH-47 Chinook.

Supporting the National Park Service rangers who undertake high-altitude rescues on Mount Rainier during the spring and summer climbing season has been the specialty of the Fort Lewis-based Company A, 5th

Battalion, 159th Aviation Regiment, since 1990, said unit commander Maj. William Wynn. And it's a mission for which the unit is very well equipped.

An Ideal Aircraft

Co. A operates 10 CH-47D Chinooks — large, twin-rotor transport helicopters that are the backbone of Army aviation's heavy-lift capability. Capable of carrying equipment and personnel to high altitudes under a variety of weather conditions, various Chinook models have served in combat theaters from Vietnam to Afghanistan. Co. A took its Chinooks

to Iraq in 2003, and also operated the aircraft during relief operations following hurricanes Katrina and Rita in 2005.

"The Chinook is a great aircraft, and it performs all the usual military missions very well," said Chief Warrant Officer 4 Bob Agee. A CH-47 pilot since the Vietnam War and currently one of Co. A's most senior aviators, he is also the supervisor of Fort Lewis's Army Reserve Aviation Support Facility.

"And the Chinook is also ideal for the mountain-rescue mission,



▲ Having taken off from the Park Service's Kautz Helibase at the mountain's 3,000-foot level, a Co. A Chinook approaches Mount Rainier during a rescue exercise.

since it has the power and lifting capability to get us and the Park Service climbing rangers to the rescue site and back," CW4 Agee said.

Just as important as the CH-47's capabilities, Maj. Wynn said, are the experience and professionalism of all of Co. A's Soldiers.

"We have some of the most experienced Chinook pilots and flight engineers in the Army," he said. "And they're backed up by our maintainers, refuelers, flight-operations personnel, and all our other Soldiers. This is a true team effort."

The Rescue Call

The National Park Service keeps close tabs on those wishing to climb Mount Rainier, Maj. Wynn said. Climbers must check in with rangers before they begin the ascent, and must give an estimate of when they'll return. If they have not appeared by the specified time, rangers begin attempting to locate the climber.

If the rangers determine that the climber is lost, incapacitated or injured, but less than 8,000 feet up

the mountain, a small commercial helicopter is brought in to perform the rescue. But if the climber is higher than 8,000 feet, the call goes out to the Chinooks of Co. A.

That call is swiftly routed through various agencies, including the U.S. Air Force's Rescue Coordination Center at Tyndall Air Force Base, Fla. Mission tasking ultimately reaches Co. A through its chain of command.

"When we get a mission, we identify and call in the crews we're going to use, and start preparing the aircraft," Maj. Wynn said. "The prepping is done by our flight engineers, who put aboard whatever equipment the Park Service rescue teams will need."

"We try to have our crews here at the facility within an hour of notification, and things sometimes move so quickly that

we're actually at the base camp when the official notification reaches us through channels," CW4 Agee added.

After launching from Fort Lewis, the Chinook flies to the Park Service's Kautz Helibase. Wedged between a large stream and a wall of trees at an elevation of 3,000 feet at the base of Mount Rainier, the small landing zone is where the Army helicopters usually rendezvous with the Park Service rescue teams.

During a quick but thorough mission briefing conducted in the shade of the Chinooks' squat fuselages, the Soldiers and Park Service personnel discuss routes, objectives and safety

➤ Gathered in the shade created by a Chinook, Army Reserve and Park Service personnel conduct an operations briefing at Kautz Helibase before lifting off on a practice mission.



issues. Then, with everyone aboard, the Chinooks lift off and climb steadily upward.

While the helicopter can sometimes land to recover a stranded climber, most rescues are made using the Chinook's internal hoist. Mounted inside the aircraft above a three-foot-square opening in the fuselage floor, the hoist is used to lower a Park Service ranger from the hovering Chinook on a long cable. Once the ranger has located and secured the climber, both are winched back aboard the CH-47.

"With the rescue hoist, we can put the rangers down just about anywhere the injured climber may be, rather than trying to land the aircraft close to the climber," CW4 Agee said. "We can then extract both the ranger and the climber from the same location. It saves time, and it means we can get the rescued person to medical care more quickly."

Critically injured climbers are flown directly to Fort Lewis's Madigan Army Medical Center, Maj. Wynn said. The less seriously injured are flown down to the base camp, where they are either transferred to a commercial helicopter or ground ambulance for evacuation to a nearby civilian hospital.

Being able to call upon the Chinooks is a huge ben-


efit for the National Park Service, said supervisory climbing ranger Mr. Mike Gauthier.

"To be honest, we can't afford such a capable helicopter," he said. "When rescues happen they tend to be intense, complex and challenging missions, and being able to call on the Chinooks is very helpful for the Park Service."

The Best Type of Training

While being able to help rescue those in need on Mount Rainer is obviously a source of great pride to the members of Co. A, Maj. Wynn said the mountain-rescue missions also benefit the Army.

"These missions are very similar to those that Chinooks are often called upon to fly in Iraq, and especially in Afghanistan," he said. Some of the mountains in the latter are 12,000 feet high and covered with snow year-round, he said, and a mission there to recover a downed Air Force pilot, for example, would be very similar to the rescue missions on Mount Rainier.

"By flying these mountain-rescue missions we're not just helping our fellow citizens," Maj. Wynn said, "we're also polishing skills that we may very well have to use in combat. This unit spent 14 months in Iraq, and if we go back, we will be more than ready." 



Having lowered a Park Service rescue ranger by hoist, the Co. A Chinook prepares to leave the immediate area. It will orbit a short distance away until called back to pick up the ranger and the "rescued climber" — in this case, a dummy of human size, shape and weight.



HONORING AN

AMERICAN HERO

Story by Mr. Steve Harding

Photos by Mr. Don Wagner

THE Army made history in mid-September when it commissioned the logistics support vessel *Major General Robert Smalls* (LSV-8) during a ceremony at the historic Inner Harbor in Baltimore, Md.

The 314-foot long, 3,190-ton ship is the first Army vessel named for an African American, and it officially joined the Army Reserve's 203rd Transportation Detachment as more than 300 guests looked on. *Smalls* is the second of two improved *Gen. Frank S. Besson*-class LSVs to enter Army service — her sistership *Staff Sgt. Robert T. Kuroda* joined the Reserve's Honolulu, Hawaii-based

548th Trans. Det. in October 2006.

Among the dignitaries attending the LSV-8 commissioning were Lt. Gen. Jack C. Stultz, chief of the Army Reserve; Maj. Gen. William Monk III, commander of the Reserve's 99th Regional Readiness Sustainment Command; Brig. Gen. James E. Chambers, the Army's chief of transportation; Rep. Elijah E. Cummings, who represents Maryland's 7th Congressional District; and Rep. James E. Clyburn of South Carolina's 6th Congressional District.

A Distinguished Name

Built by VT Halter Marine in Moss Point, Miss., and christened

in April 2004, LSV-8 will be homeported in Curtis Bay, Md., and is named in honor of Robert Smalls. As a 23-year-old slave during the Civil War he commandeered a Confederate transport steamer loaded with armaments and used the vessel to spirit his wife, children and 12 other slaves to freedom. Hailed as a hero by Union leaders, Robert Smalls went on to become the first African-American to captain a vessel in U.S. service and later served as a major general in the South Carolina militia, a state legislator, a five-term member of the U.S. Congress and U.S. Collector of Customs in Beaufort, S.C.

That LSV-8 bears Maj. Gen. Smalls' name is due largely to the efforts of Ms. Kitt Haley Alexander, a writer and artist who spearheaded a seven-year effort to have an American military vessel named after the Civil War hero.

"I knew that this man deserved more recognition from this nation," she said, "and I first approached the Navy about naming a ship after him. After that didn't work out I ended up sitting near the Army's chief of military history at a social function

◀ Some of the more than 300 guests who attended the September commissioning ceremony in Baltimore read about Maj. Gen. Smalls' exploits and his contributions to the nation.





▲ At 314 feet and 3,190 tons, *Maj. Gen. Robert Smalls* and her sistership, *Staff Sgt. Robert T. Kuroda*, are the largest vessels currently in Army service. All eight LSVs are capable of worldwide operations.

and, after speaking with him later, he said that Robert Smalls' service in the militia might allow the Army to name a vessel after him."

After a lengthy verification process, the Civil War hero was selected to give his name to the vessel.

Ships for Worldwide Missions

Maj. Gen. Robert Smalls and the other seven LSVs currently in Army service provide worldwide transport of general and vehicular cargo. Fitted with huge bow and stern loading ramps, the ships each boast a 10,500-square-foot central cargo deck large enough to hold up to 24 M-1 Abrams tanks. *Kuroda* and *Smalls* — launched in 2003 and 2004, respectively — are updated variants of the six earlier *Besson*-class LSVs and incorporate improved bow ramps, upgraded communication and navigation systems, and a host of other refinements.

The vessels in the Army's watercraft fleet range in size from small workboats to the LSVs, according to U.S. Army Transportation Corps officials. Army vessels have participated

in each of the nation's conflicts since the Revolutionary War, and currently play a vital role in supporting operations in Iraq and Afghanistan, as well as participating in humanitarian-relief efforts in the Pacific and Caribbean.

"This is a tremendously capable vessel, and we're very fortunate to have such an asset in the Army and the Army Reserve," said Chief Warrant Officer 4 Steven C. Brown, commander of the 203rd Trans. Det. and LSV-8's vessel master. "We've

trained very hard to bring this ship into the Army's fleet, and this commissioning ceremony is a way of saying that *Maj. Gen. Robert Smalls* and her crew are ready to undertake their wartime missions."

"This is a great day, and one I will never forget," said Mr. Freddy Meyer, great-great grandson of Maj. Gen. Smalls and one of many of the former slave's descendants on hand for the September ceremony. "Maj. Gen. Smalls was a renaissance man — an educator, a politician, a Soldier, a businessman and a family man, and the Army could not have picked a better person to name this ship after."

Mr. Meyer and other Smalls family members were aboard the vessel when she first arrived in Maryland, and had the opportunity to get to know many of the crewmembers.

"I know that these Soldiers will be an excellent crew for this great vessel," he said. "They're smart and professional, and they're very mindful of the kind of man Robert Smalls was, and what he stood for. This ship could not be in better hands." ■



◀ A large American flag hangs from *Smalls'* raised brow visor on the day of her commissioning. When the visor is raised, the huge bow ramp can be lowered to facilitate loading and unloading of vehicles.

Building an All-

Story by Ms. Elizabeth M. Lorge



THEY'RE not just strong. They're Army strong. But they're not Soldiers — they're America's top high-school football players using the same leadership, discipline and teamwork that Soldiers put into play on the battlefield. These students will battle it out Jan. 5 in this year's Army All-American Bowl, an East-West match-up sponsored by U.S. Army Recruiting Command in San Antonio, Texas.

According to Coach Herman Boone, namesake of the AAB's most-valuable-player trophy, and his former assistant, Coach Bill Yoast, the seven Army values — loyalty, duty, respect, selfless service, honor, integrity and personal courage — are crucial in building any sports team.

Building Teams

Portrayed by Mr. Denzel Washington in the movie "Remember the Titans," Coach Boone was named as the head football coach of the newly-integrated T.C. Williams High School in Alexandria, Va., in 1971 and worked with Coach Yoast to build a successful team in spite of racial tensions.

Student athletes come together from across the country and must learn to



Ms. Elizabeth M. Lorge works for the Army News Service.

◀ Coach Herman Boone greets 1st Sgt. Cynthia Barren and a player before the 2004 All-American Bowl game, played at the Alamodome stadium in San Antonio, Texas.

Master Sgt. Jack Braden

American Team

"You first build a team through trust. Trust becomes respect. Respect becomes the emotional glue that binds us together."

work together and function as a team in a matter of days, and the teamwork and leadership experience they gain as a result are invaluable, said Coach Boone.

"But one of the most important things that those kids get to see is that the values of a football team are exactly the same values as the Army's," he said.

Coach Yoast, a World War II veteran, agreed, saying that football coaches and scouts look for more than just the best players.

"They're looking for character," he said. "And the Army is doing the same thing. You can measure many things in athletes and Soldiers, but you can't measure loyalty and integrity, and that comes out as a result of training in both the Army and athletics."

Both he and Coach Boone said that a team is a group of individuals with only one heartbeat and one goal, selfless in their loyalty and dedication to the good of the group. If any member acts as an individual, the game or the battle will be lost.



Daren Reehl

Respect becomes the emotional glue that binds us together. I used to tell my team that every person deserves respect. They don't deserve to be liked, but they deserve

to be respected," Coach Boone said.

Coach Boone used to tell his players about his brother, a Soldier in North Africa during World War II, as an example of what teamwork can accomplish and how it can conquer even deep racism and save lives.

One of his brother's platoon mates was from Mississippi, and hated blacks and Jews. But during one firefight, the two men ended up in the same foxhole.

"They looked at each other, and the thought in both of their eyes was, 'By God man, you're black.' 'Well, by God man, you're white.' 'Well, okay, we've got to put our differences aside.' My brother said they put their backs together, and they started firing in unison, 360 degrees, and they saved each other's lives. They had no choice but to put their differences aside and they created respect for each other. That respect became the emotional glue that kept those two people corresponding for the next 50 years. Had either one of them acted as an individual in that foxhole, both of them would have been dead," he said.



▲ Sgt. Maj. of the Army Kenneth O. Preston talks with famed coaches Yoast (center) and Boone at the 2007 All-American Bowl.

Coach Yoast said he learned a lot of discipline in the service and believes this is important in helping athletes and Soldiers deal with physical, mental and emotional challenges.

"The young men and women in the service are so disciplined. I can see athletes becoming more and more so. We spend a lot of time in San Antonio with the Army and I'm just amazed at the way these young men carry themselves, not only physically, but the way they come back from war and come out and deal with the public, their self-confidence," he said.

In acronym form, the seven Army values spell out an abbreviation of leadership. This is appropriate, because, as Coach Boone said, all of the values are instilled in a team through its leaders.

"Leaders lead not only by example, leaders lead with passion," he said. "Whether people believe in this person or not, they learn to respect him because he believes with passion

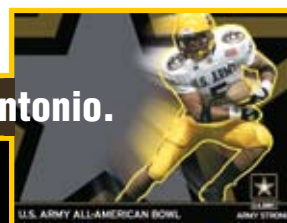
and he leads with truthfulness, honor and dignity. And he makes great sacrifices, not for himself, but for his team. I used to ask my coaches, 'After each practice, ask yourselves what three leadership goals can

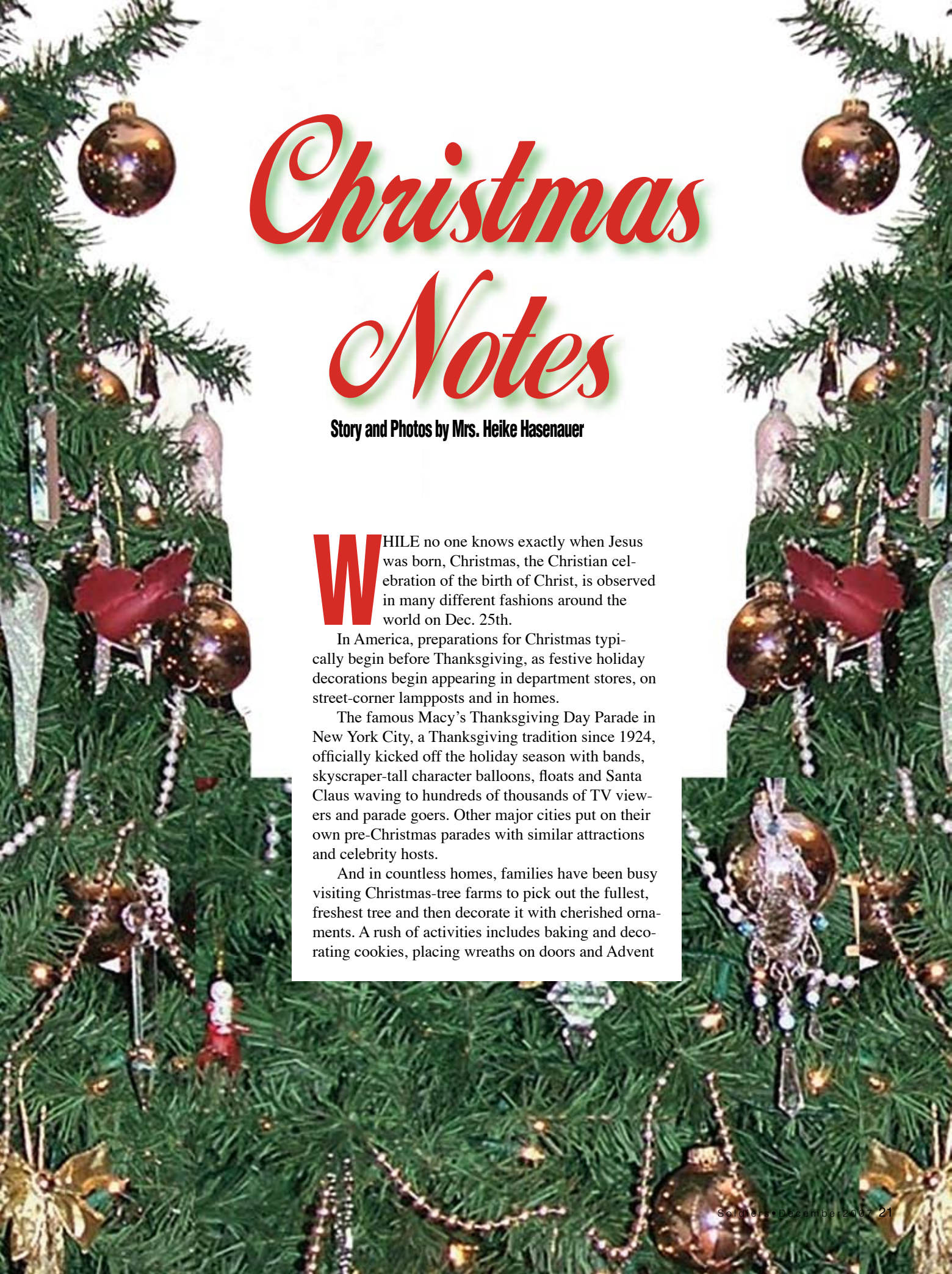
you come up with tomorrow that will make your team a better team than it was today?'"

Both men work as motivational speakers, and Coach Boone talks to high school coaches and athletes about the opportunities the Army can offer the many athletes who won't get scholarships. The values are similar, and for some students, the Army may offer their only opportunity to go to college.

"We're your fathers, those of you who do not have a father. We love you like a father, we will protect you, we will honor you, we will teach you, now all of a sudden you've graduated, and what can we do for you? Because of the education the Army can give to each one of those kids, the Army becomes a very viable option. I found out that kids in today's Army, in some places in this country, make more in salary than first-year teachers. I looked around at my team, the '71 Titans, that the Army honored at last year's bowl game. There were colonels, majors and captains who had gone to college through the Army." 📌

The 2008 AAB is scheduled for Jan. 5 in San Antonio.





Christmas Notes

Story and Photos by Mrs. Heike Hasenauer

WHILE no one knows exactly when Jesus was born, Christmas, the Christian celebration of the birth of Christ, is observed in many different fashions around the world on Dec. 25th.

In America, preparations for Christmas typically begin before Thanksgiving, as festive holiday decorations begin appearing in department stores, on street-corner lampposts and in homes.

The famous Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade in New York City, a Thanksgiving tradition since 1924, officially kicked off the holiday season with bands, skyscraper-tall character balloons, floats and Santa Claus waving to hundreds of thousands of TV viewers and parade goers. Other major cities put on their own pre-Christmas parades with similar attractions and celebrity hosts.

And in countless homes, families have been busy visiting Christmas-tree farms to pick out the fullest, freshest tree and then decorate it with cherished ornaments. A rush of activities includes baking and decorating cookies, placing wreaths on doors and Advent



wreaths on tables, opening the windows of an Advent calendar to mark down the days until Christmas, buying and wrapping gifts, and sending Christmas cards to friends and loved ones.

Americans remember, too, the brave men and women in service to our country — and those who have died in that service.

Since 1992 thousands of holiday wreaths have been placed lovingly on the graves of servicemembers buried at Arlington National Cemetery. The token of America's remembrance of the fallen can be credited to Mr. Morrill Worcester, the owner of a holiday wreath company in Maine, who one year had a 4,000-wreath surplus and decided to donate the wreaths to the cemetery, "a most memorable place" he'd visited as a child.

Soldiers magazine wishes you and yours a happy and safe holiday season and health and happiness in the coming New Year. 🇺🇸





◀ Clockwise from top left: Santa and Mrs. Claus wave at visitors to Philadelphia's pre-Christmas parade; family members exchange gifts and partake of holiday goodies; a family matriarch prepares traditional specialties for her family; a resident of a California neighborhood offers "tourists" a song, dance and good cheer; a wreath adorns the site of the Tomb of the Unknowns; "toy soldiers" march down Main Street U.S.A. at Disneyland in California.

Portraits of

Story by Ms. Heike Hasenauer Photos by Mr. David Hawkinson

THE Goat Woman,” as Ms. Kaziah Hancock is known throughout central Utah, has an uncanny love of the goats she calls “her girls.” She raises some 110 of them on her 15-acre Manti, Utah, ranch, has immortalized many of them in paintings and signs all of her art works with her “Kaziah, the Goat Woman” trademark.

In 2002 Ms. Hancock started doing something else considered by many to be a bit eccentric — she began painting portraits of servicemembers who had been killed in operations Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom and sending them to their families — free of charge. As of August, she’d completed 351 portraits, averaging 10 to 12 per month.

Today four other artists participate in Project Compassion, a privately funded, nonprofit organization she founded in 2002 to provide gallery-quality, original oil portraits of American servicemembers who have been killed on active duty since the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11, 2001, to their families.

Together with Ms. Hancock’s paintings, the artists have collectively completed and shipped more than 700 portraits to bereaved families, she said.

The artist and author of “Prisons of the Mind,” a book about her polygamist upbringing, has reason enough to love goats: “I owe my life to them,” she said, remembering the story her mother told her about the night she was born in a tent in the Arizona desert.

Her father had died several days before, and with little water to drink, Ms. Hancock’s mother had been unable to provide milk

Ramone Villatoto





the Fallen

In 2002 Ms. Kaziah Hancock began painting portraits of servicemembers killed in Iraq and Afghanistan, and sending the paintings to the families of those killed. She has so far completed 351 portraits.



Ms. Hancock is widely known as "The Goat Woman."

to nurse her baby. Ms. Hancock's 9-year-old brother milked a goat to feed his sister and keep her alive.

Unable to have children of her own, Ms. Hancock loves and appreciates servicemembers for the sacrifices they make every day, she said. When she speaks about the men and women in uniform who have died, her voice quivers and tears well up in her eyes.

Today, her goats provide a reprieve from the day-to-day seriousness of her work. "I don't think I could handle this much pain if I didn't have them to heal me," she said.

Her first portrait, completed in March 2004, was of the first Soldier from Utah killed in Iraq, Chief Warrant Officer 2 John Daren Smith. At the time of his enlistment he listed Salt Lake City as home.

The Black Hawk helicopter pilot died in Kuwait in February 2003, before OIF began. His helicopter crashed during a training mission.

When Ms. Hancock started Project Compassion fewer than 80 servicemembers had been killed, and she promised to complete a portrait of every one who died in the war, she said. "At the time, I had \$5,000 in my savings account.

"Everyone thought that we, with our modern technology, could get the war wrapped up quickly," she said. "I never thought the months would turn into years."

She completed 15 paintings that first year. When word about her paintings got out, and with casualties mounting, she

Dale A. Panchot



John D. Smith

had to dedicate more of her time to working on Project Compassion. That meant she began spending less time turning out the gallery art work that was her livelihood and which brought in between \$2,000 and \$10,000 a piece, she said.

Suddenly, families had to wait longer for Ms. Hancock's response to their requests for portraits.

On Nov. 17, 2003, Staff Sgt. Dale Aldon Panchot was killed south of Balad, Iraq, when a rocket-propelled grenade hit his Bradley fighting vehicle. Ms. Hancock completed his portrait and sent it to his family in Northome, Minn., in 2006.

"May you feel your son's love every day. Love, Kaziah," she wrote on a note that accompanied the framed portrait. "There's nothing I'll ever paint that's more appreciated," she told an ABC News crew that was at the Panchot house when the gift arrived.



“In the beginning, what I did was a simple act of kindness, inspired by appreciation for the Soldiers and their families — to honor them and tell their families: ‘I love you and appreciate the willingness of your child to face the enemy on my behalf,’” she said.

She read many last letters home that Soldiers sent their families before they were killed. And, through the photos sent to her from loved ones, she “looked into the faces of these kids, time after time, and got a sense of their personalities,” Ms. Hancock said.

“I reached a new level of maturity. The way I see it, when you look at the end of your life, you can’t take the awards, recognition or money with you. But you can take appreciation and love,” she said. “I believe that the Soldier who was killed stood for something. So I’m going to stand for something, too, to honor the honorable.”

In November 2006, Mr. Tom McDonough sent a letter from Minnesota to Ms. Hancock after he’d seen a local TV broadcast about her and her paintings.

“We never want one of your paintings,” Mr. McDonough wrote, as though penning the words would eliminate the possibility that his son, Bryan, could be killed.



Bryan T. McDonough

A few weeks later, on Dec. 2, 2006, Sgt. Bryan Thomas McDonough died in Fallujah, Iraq, when his Humvee hit an improvised explosive device. Mr. McDonough sent another letter to Ms. Hancock the day after Christmas: “I beg you to do the portrait we never wanted,” he wrote.

In the weeks that followed, the McDonough family moved and by Father’s Day still hadn’t heard anything about their request

— until Bryan’s younger brother asked that the family drive by their old home. The wrapped portrait was standing on the front porch. The day would have been Bryan’s 31st birthday.

To date, Ms. Hancock has spent about \$35,000 of her own money from the sale of her gallery art work to keep Project Compassion going, she said, and donations have covered about one-third the cost of materials and shipment of the portraits.

Support increased in June 2007, when the Depart-

For more information on Project Compassion go to **www.heropaintings.com**.

For more information on America Supports You, go to **www.americasupportsyou.com**



Chassan Henry

ment of Defense approved Project Compassion as an official, nonprofit partner with America Supports You, qualifying the project for major corporate sponsorship, she said.

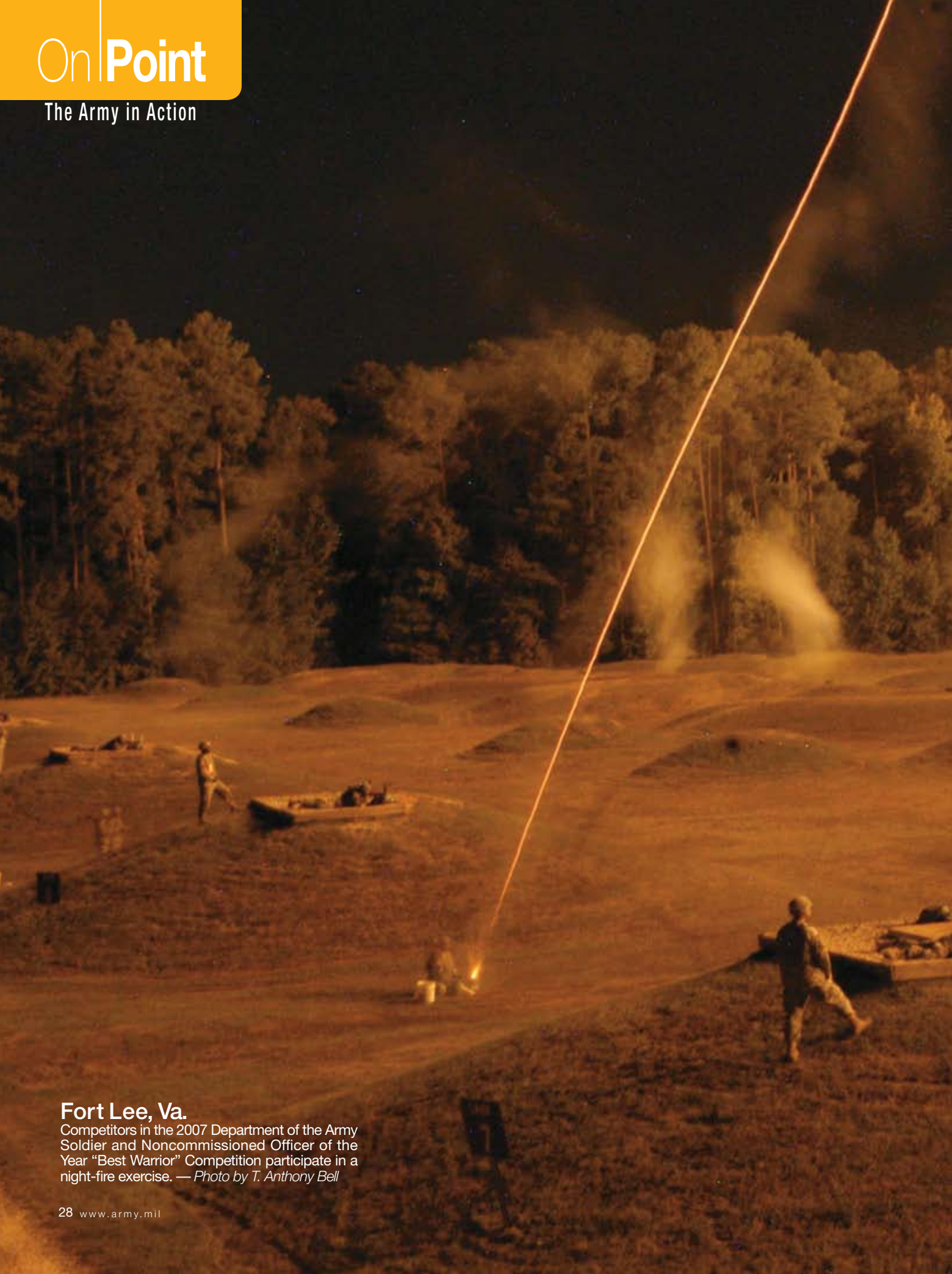
America Supports You was officially launched in November 2004 to recognize the support of individuals and groups for U.S. servicemembers, especially in Iraq and Afghanistan. Through the program, thousands of people — from schoolchildren to employees of major corporations — host events and plan projects to show their support to America’s servicemembers.

Recently, too, FEDEX offered to pay all shipping costs for the project, about \$30,000 per year, Ms. Hancock said. And Packaging Corp. of America has agreed to supply all the boxes.

“I honestly believe that when I die I’ll lay in my coffin with a clear conscience,” she said. “I didn’t just love these Soldiers. I showed their families my love.”



Michael Monsoor



Fort Lee, Va.

Competitors in the 2007 Department of the Army Soldier and Noncommissioned Officer of the Year "Best Warrior" Competition participate in a night-fire exercise. — *Photo by T. Anthony Bell*



►Iraq

The Sulaymaniyah International Airport is open for business and hosts direct flights to and from Istanbul, Amman, Dubai, Baghdad and Munich. — Photo by Maj. Juanita Chang



▼Iraq

A Soldier speaks with the local children during a patrol in Al Wardiya. — Photo by Staff Sgt. Shawn Weismiller, USAF





▲ Mali

Capt. Laura Porter prescribes medication for children during a medical capabilities exercise in Senkoro, as part of Exercise Flintlock 2007. — *Photo by Tech. Sgt. Jeremy K. Cross, USAF*

▼ Fort Irwin, Calif.

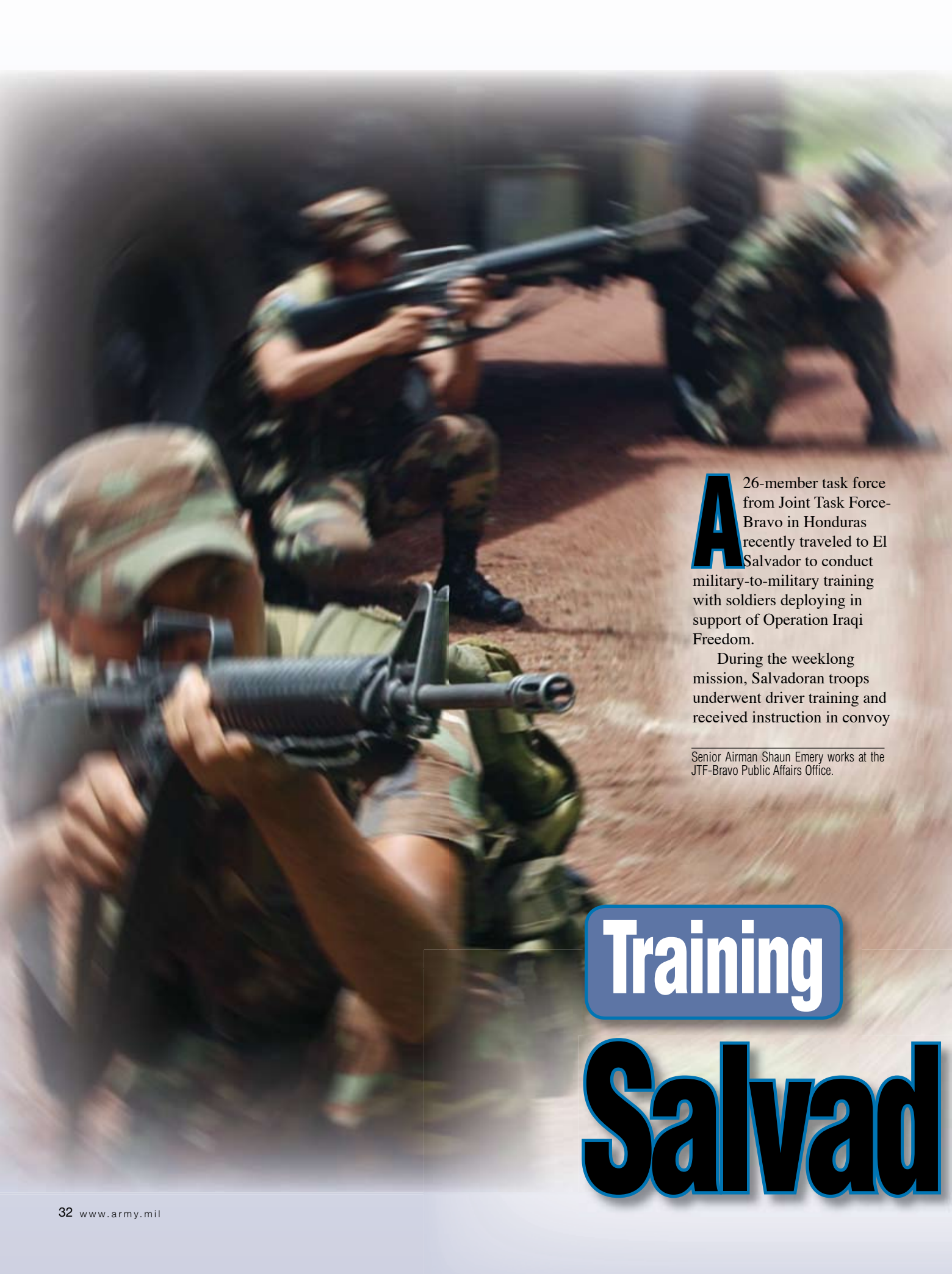
Soldiers from the 25th Infantry Division at Schofield Barracks, Hawaii, charge out of the back of a Stryker vehicle during a pre-deployment training exercise. — *Photo by Spc. Tiffany Dusterhoft*



▲ Afghanistan

Special forces Soldiers engage enemy fighters in Helmand Province. — *Photo by Spc. Daniel Love*





A 26-member task force from Joint Task Force-Bravo in Honduras recently traveled to El Salvador to conduct military-to-military training with soldiers deploying in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

During the weeklong mission, Salvadoran troops underwent driver training and received instruction in convoy

Senior Airman Shaun Emery works at the JTF-Bravo Public Affairs Office.

Training

Salvad

► Spc. Jonathan Potter, who provided medical instruction during the week-long training with the Salvadoran military, watches as a student prepares to insert an intravenous needle into a “wounded” soldier.

► Members of the Salvadoran military provide protection as their medical personnel transport “wounded” soldiers to a simulated triage facility.

and perimeter security, communications, detection of and safeguards against improvised explosive devices, civilian and military cooperation, and combat lifesaving.

At week’s end, their new skills were tested during a simulated convoy attack. It kicked off with the convoy getting hit with a simulated IED. From there, the convoy-security troops neutralized the “enemy.” At the same time, medical personnel were treating the “wounded” in the back of a 5-ton truck. When the area was secure, the drivers quickly delivered the “wounded” to a triage center where the medical students offloaded them.

At the triage station, medical students evaluated each patient, provided the necessary treatment and prepared the “wounded” for evacuation. With all the action happening around them, radio operators relayed coordinates to a simulated helicopter to provide medical evacuation.

“They are an extremely professional force,” Lt. Col. Greg Jicha, the task force commander and commander of U.S. Army forces at Soto Cano Air Base, Honduras, said of the Salvadoran soldiers. “They go into each day of training with ambition and the desire to learn. They understand the seriousness of the situation they’ll face in Iraq.”

El Salvador is the only country



in Central America that provides personnel to support Operation Iraqi Freedom, said Lt. Col. Jicha.

Col. Jose Atilio Benitez Parada, the commandant of Battalion Cuscatlan, said his country knows well the effects of terrorism. During the 12-year civil war in El Salvador, he witnessed too many instances of brutality, he said, and is proud to support America.

While in Iraq, Salvadoran soldiers will use American military equipment, so it is important they receive proper training on the equipment before they deploy. Drivers who had never operated a Humvee, medics who had not seen some of the life-saving tools used by U.S. Soldiers, and radio operators who would be using equipment foreign to them all, said they felt much more comfortable about their upcoming deployment after becoming familiar with the equipment they’d need to survive.

“The language barrier was the only tough part for me,” said Staff Sgt. David Saucer, a U.S. driver

trainer. “But as far as their interest in learning about and operating the vehicle, we couldn’t have asked for more.”

Sgt. Saucer, Staff Sgt. Brian Grishaw and Master Sgt. Elva Marquez went over basic preventive maintenance and the layout of the vehicle before drivers took to the road. As Humvees and the 5-ton truck rolled by, medical personnel were busy learning the techniques that could save their fellow soldiers’ lives. From victim assessment to administering intravenous needles, students ran the full gamut of combat life-saver training. According to their medical instructors, the only thing more impressive than the skills they demonstrated was their eagerness to learn.

“I’m so proud of this group,” said Capt. Marta Artiga, a U.S. Army medical instructor. “They came to training every day ready to take the next step. They grasped everything we taught them and were able to put it into practice.”

orans for Iraq

Story and Photos by Senior
Airman Shaun Emery, USAF

Training

for



Warfare

Story and Photos by Mr. Bob Rosenburgh

TO prepare its Soldiers for missions in the type of challenging terrain found in Afghanistan and Iraq, the Army often relies on the specialized training offered at the Army Mountain Warfare School in Jericho, Vt.

AMWS teaches Soldiers the skills they'll need to operate in rugged terrain, in bad weather, both day and night.

Mr. Bob Rosenburgh is the public affairs officer for Western Region Cadet Command.

"We don't focus on tactics," said Capt. Christopher Ruggerio, AMWS assistant operations officer, "but rather on how to move and survive at higher elevations, in all kinds of weather conditions. Once a unit masters those things, it can develop its collective tactics accordingly."

Operated by the Vermont Army National Guard, the school provides training to all elements of the active Army and reserve component, Army ROTC and West



The Army Mountain Warfare School in Jericho, Vt., teaches Soldiers the specialized skills they'll need to operate in rugged terrain, in bad weather, both day and night.

Point cadets, other branches of the armed forces, allied forces and civil agencies from around the country, Capt. Ruggerio said.

AMWS was established in 1983 and has been twice accredited as a School of Excellence by the Infantry School, Capt. Ruggerio added. "In 2005 we achieved permanent member status in the International Army Military Mountaineers, a select group of highly trained military mountaineers from Germany, Italy, Belgium, Sweden and Austria, among other nations. The AMWS is the only member from the United States."

AMWS is located on the Ethan Allen Firing Range, an 11,000-acre facility that is the Vermont National Guard's primary training area. About 40 minutes from the range is Smuggler's Notch ski resort, the school's secondary training area.

It's there that students complete a challenging three-day mountain walk that puts all their newly learned skills to the test, Capt. Ruggerio said.

AMWS offers Level 1 and Level 2 Mountaineer training.

"Level 2 is our Assault Climber's Course," Capt. Ruggerio said. "This is the advanced course for mountaineer leaders and subject-matter experts." Level 2 climbers are responsible for inspecting mountaineering



▲ Winter mountaineering requires a variety of special-purpose tools and equipment, as evidenced by the amount and type of gear these Soldiers are carrying.

equipment and training mountaineers in their own units. They are the commander's experts and advisers for anything having to do with mountaineering skills and tasks.

The school also provides mobile training teams that deploy to remote locations to teach mountaineering skills.

"We get calls for on-site and off-site teams to visit locations in the continental United States and overseas," Capt. Ruggerio said.

On-site courses at AMWS are offered in both the summer and winter, since the different seasons present differing challenges at the same location.

"The snow, ice and cold of winter

require different climbing techniques and equipment," Capt. Ruggerio said. "You use your ice axe and crampons to climb. In the summer, you're rock climbing, using your hands and feet."

AMWS also teaches avalanche rescue, and its mountaineering techniques are designed to be effective beyond the wooded hills of Vermont.

"The mountains of Afghanistan have very few trees, so we also teach an anchoring system, whereby students use twigs and a rock as an anchor that's as strong as tying up to a big tree," Capt. Ruggerio said.

"AMWS instructors wrote the Army's military mountaineering field manual, and the standard operating



AMWS students move single file to help firmly pack the snow as they descend a steep hill into a chilly Vermont valley. One survival dynamic taught at the school is the danger of frostbite and wind chill, as well as avoiding other cold-weather injuries.

procedures for high-angle, high-altitude recovery and recovering a cache of weapons from a well,” he said.

The latter SOP was written by members of a mobile training team while it was in Afghanistan and had dealt with such situations.

The AMWS covers a lot of esoteric, but important, situations encountered in mountain operations. Instructors can even teach mule packing, Capt. Ruggerio said.

“The Level I and Level II courses are each 14 days long and accommodate about 60 students per class. Fewer students compose the MTT-instructed classes.

Cadet Manuel Orozco, a “Green-to-Gold” scholarship-program cadet from Florida State University, has

completed two tours in Iraq, one in Bosnia and one in Kosovo as an enlisted Soldier. Already a graduate of the summer mountaineering course, he jumped at the chance to complete a skill-qualification requirement with the winter course.

“I’ve been to multiple service schools, but this one is different from all the others,” he said. “All the new skills I’ve learned can be used in Afghanistan or other mountainous areas, and in combat that knowledge will keep my men alive.”

Cadet Shelby Vance Williams from the University of Central Oklahoma agreed.

“I can see this benefiting a lot because of all the different types of terrain we’re fighting in, the effects of

weather on weapons and movement, and so many other variables,” he said. “This is a harsher terrain than almost anything we’ll see elsewhere, so it really prepares us.”

The school’s instructors make the training valuable, Capt. Ruggerio said. While active-duty Soldiers may move from one assignment to the next, AMWS is a National Guard facility and many staff members spend their entire careers teaching mountaineering courses.

The levels of expertise developed over time are therefore impressive, he said. Instructors also frequently conduct training at places like Mount Everest and Mount McKinley, and they learn from other agencies’ master mountaineers.

Staff Sgt. Tyler Williamson of the 51st Infantry Regiment’s long-range surveillance company at Fort Bragg, N.C., said the AMWS provides the Army with a priceless service. As a veteran of mountain warfare in Afghanistan, he sees a clear advantage for Soldiers who complete the course.

“When I get back to Fort Bragg, I’ll help set up our mountain section, refit and retrain the Soldiers who compose it and, hopefully, get more Soldiers to attend AMWS,” Staff Sgt. Williamson said. “The Army needs to put an emphasis on mountain warfare and on this school, and the word needs to get out throughout the Army about what’s available here.”



Protecting the WESTERN TOAD

Story by Ms. Rachel Young Photo by Mr. Jason Kaye

ON an unseasonably warm Friday recently, the cheerful chirps of Western toads filled the air around Fiander Lake in the Rainier Training Area of Fort Lewis, Wash.

The toads' vocalizations were the first indicators to Mr. Jim Lynch, a fish and wildlife biologist for the Fort Lewis Fish and Wildlife Program, that breeding season was under way.

The Western toads' breeding season is of particular interest, because the toads are candidates for Washington's endangered species list. Fort Lewis is one of the last strongholds for Western toads, thanks to the wetlands and undeveloped forest and prairie habitats around the post.

Because little is known about the toads, wildlife biologists study them to discover "anything that will help us better protect them," Mr. Lynch said. "By monitoring the health of our toad population, we hope to be able to respond quickly to any threats to the population, such as might be caused by diseases."

The breeding season at Fiander Lake is an opportune time to gather information about the Western toad population, said Mr. Lynch. So he, along with fish and wildlife biologist Mr. Todd Zuchowski and wildlife technicians Mr. Nick Miller and Mr. John Richardson, headed out in a rowboat to scoop toads out of the water.

The spotted, forest-green toads skimmed the water's surface, as they loudly announced their presence. A few males clutched the females and waited for them to begin laying eggs so they could fertilize them.

The captured toads, brought ashore in large buckets, were weighed and measured,

then transponders were implanted in their bodies.

"This helps us determine their lifespans, breeding sites, fidelity, changes in size over time, and long-term movements," Mr. Lynch said.

After recording the information, the men returned the toads to the lake.

Mr. Lynch has studied Western toad migration and breeding patterns for three years to learn how far they travel from the breeding ground, if they all go in the same direction and where they go after breeding.

He hopes to have enough information in the next year to publish a study indicating how the Western toad is using Fort Lewis land, and how the amphibians would thrive under similar conditions elsewhere.

"Fort Lewis has a lot of rare species, but we want other people to keep their populations, too," Mr. Lynch said. If the species is added to the endangered species list, Fort Lewis doesn't want to have the only population. "We want to share the burden, rather than to be solely responsible for helping this rare species survive."

The long-term goal is to partner with agencies that have suitable lands where Western toads can thrive and to move some of Fort Lewis's toad population to those areas, Mr. Lynch said. 

Ms. Rachael Young works for the Northwest Guardian newspaper at Fort Lewis, Wash.



New Rule Limits Predatory Loans

THE Defense Department has established new rules to protect servicemembers who seek high-interest emergency loans.

A new regulation limits the

annual percentage rate on payday loans, vehicle title loans and tax-refund anticipation loans to 36 percent for active-duty servicemembers and their families.

The 36-percent limit in the regulation includes all fees and charges, and the rule prohibits contracts requiring the use of a check or access to a bank account, mandatory arbitration and unreasonable legal notice.

The regulation makes it a criminal offense for lenders to knowingly charge a higher interest rate to servicemembers.

DOD officials are trying to educate servicemembers about

financial planning and where to go for help in an emergency.

Often, servicemembers can go to their banks or credit unions and ask which loans are available, or they can go to their military-aid societies or community-support centers.

Most institutions, including the Internal Revenue Service, often are willing to work with clients to defer payments, Army officials said.

Servicemembers can also go to the online resources Military OneSource and Military Homefront for information on financial planning.

— Sgt. Sara Wood,
American Forces Press Service



Same-Day Service for USAREUR Arrivals

SOLDIERS and their family members arriving for assignments in U.S. Army, Europe, will no longer have to wait days to reach their final destinations. Troops will reach their new USAREUR duty stations the same day they arrive in theater, under a USAREUR policy that took effect Oct. 1.

In the past, Soldiers had to spend a night with the 64th Replacement Detachment at Pioneer Kaserne in Hanau, Germany, before an initial briefing early the next day and before being bused to their units of assignment.

USAREUR leaders hope to soon open a reception facility at or near the airport.

— Sgt. Aimee Millham, USAREUR
Public Affairs Office

Army Announces New RCI Partner

Picerne Military Housing, LLC, will develop the Community Development and Management Plan for Fort Sill, Okla., as part of the Army's Residential Communities Initiative, which provides family housing improvements on military installations.

Picerne will work with the Army to develop the CDMP, which will be the blueprint for the family neighborhoods at Fort Sill.

The Army plans to privatize family housing at 45 installations throughout the United States under the RCI, to provide quality homes for Soldiers.

The RCI program is part of the Army's plan to alleviate housing shortages, and sustain quality communities over the 50-year life of the partnership projects.

Picerne, headquartered in North Kingstown, R.I., has created RCI communities throughout the United States.

For more information visit the RCI program Web site at www.rci.army.mil. Picerne Military Housing's Web site is www.picernemilitaryhousing.com.

— Army News Service

Stryker Crews Train on Mobile Gun System

SOLDIERS are training and testing a new Stryker mounted cannon at Fort Wainwright, Alaska.

The 25th Infantry Division's 1st Stryker Brigade Combat Team is the third Stryker brigade to receive the M-1128 Mobile Gun System.

Mounted atop the MGS is a 105-mm cannon similar to the main gun on an M-1 Abrams main battle tank.

The MGS can fire six rounds per minute. The gun is self-loading, requiring three Soldiers to operate the vehicle — a driver, a gunner and a vehicle commander. Four Soldiers are needed to operate an M-1.

The first Soldiers to train on and test the Stryker-mounted MGS said the system is beneficial to the Army because of the extra firepower Strykers can provide the infantry. — *ARNEWS*



Rapid-Fielding Milestone at Fort Polk

THE Army's Program Executive Office-Soldier recently outfitted its one-millionth customer with a Rapid-Fielding Initiative kit.

RFI was initiated in 2002 when Soldiers in Afghanistan recognized the need for improved equipment that was lighter and more durable than standard Army-issue gear, and would endure the demands of desert, mountain and urban warfare.

RFI delivers up-to-date equipment to Soldiers as quickly as possible, and includes gear that enhances combat effectiveness, saves Soldiers' lives and improves quality of life in the field.

PEO Soldier compiled a list of 15 items, including items Soldiers were purchasing on



their own.

RFI currently equips about 24,000 Soldiers each month.

Maj. Gen. Daniel P. Bolger, commander of the Joint Readiness Training Center and Fort Polk, La., said RFI represents a commitment by the Army and the nation to equip Soldiers with the best possible gear.

The RFI Kit contains 58 individual and small-unit equipment items, including ballistic eye wear, combat ear protection, a strap cutter for emergency egress from vehicles, cold-weather clothing, an equipment vest and the advanced combat helmet.

For more information visit www.peosoldier.army.mil.

— Jean Dubiel, Fort Polk
Public Affairs Office

The U.S. Army

Story by Sgt. 1st Class Erica Russo

Photos Courtesy of the USAFB



y Field Band



ALTHOUGH some are familiar with the military through newspaper headlines and cable news, many Americans have found a personal connection to all Soldiers through the efforts of one unit — The U.S. Army Field Band.

Part of the Army's Office of the Chief of Public Affairs, the Washington, D.C.-based band travels thousands of miles each year. The Field Band was founded in 1946, and since 2005 has reached more than five million Americans through live and televised performances, given free of charge.

SFC Erica Russo is assigned to The U.S. Army Field Band

➤ Besides entertaining Americans at home and abroad, members of The Field Band march in ceremonial parades, participate in state funerals and conduct clinics and workshops for young musicians.

Four Components

The band consists of four performing components and administrative and operations sections that coordinate the touring schedule.

The Concert Band, which includes woodwinds, brass and percussion, typically tours with the mixed-voice Soldiers' Chorus. These groups perform everything from patriotic standards and pop arrangements to classical.

Another ensemble, the Jazz Ambassadors, was created in 1969 to bring jazz treasures and more contemporary melodies to new audiences. And the Volunteers, a combo featuring male and female vocalists, performs contemporary rock, country and pop music.

An Important Mission

Besides entertaining Americans at home and abroad, the unit's instrumentalists march in the presidential inaugural parade every four years. And the Soldiers' Chorus, as a part of the Armed Forces Chorus, has participated in the state funerals of former presidents.

The band's recordings and DVDs, provided free of charge to schools and universities across the United States, encourage performance of American music and are used by instructors to improve musical skills and techniques. Band members also develop clinics, workshops and concerts to meet students' needs.

A recent sponsor described the impact of these experiences.

"The band and chorus represent all the right values, and so many band directors are looking for what you provide," wrote Ms. Sue Buratto, a teacher in Fort Worth, Texas. Another teacher, Ms. Barbara Barnes of Shelbyville, Tenn., wrote: "The Volunteers performed for fifth through eighth graders, and held their undivided attention. The kids didn't want it to end!"

Effective and Rewarding

"Bands are one of the Army's most effective tools for outreach, whether displaying the excellence of America's Army to our citizens or challenging young Americans to answer the call to duty," said incoming Field Band commander Col. Thomas H. Palmatier.

"The really rewarding part of our job is thanking veterans, Soldiers and their families for their service and sacrifice in communities across the country that wouldn't otherwise have any contact with the Army," added Lt. Col. Beth Steele, deputy commander of the band. Every Field Band concert includes, when possible, a tribute to operations Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom, in which returning Soldiers join the band to be welcomed home by their local communities. 🇺🇸





▲ The Volunteers — a combo that performs contemporary rock, country and pop music — perform at Epcot Center in Florida.

◀ The Jazz Ambassadors bring jazz treasures and more contemporary melodies to new audiences around the world.

Adopt a Sol

Story by Ms. Heike Hasenauer

FIRST Lt. Katherine Broyer, a platoon leader in Company D, 82nd General Support Aviation Battalion, deployed to Afghanistan in January 2007. She's due to return home by February 2008.

Responsible for 38 Soldiers who perform helicopter maintenance, 1st Lt. Broyer said: "Without my Soldiers and all of their hard work we wouldn't be able to accomplish our mission of assisting the ground forces in northeastern Afghanistan."

A Black Hawk helicopter pilot, 1st Lt. Broyer flies two to three missions a week, performing tasks ranging from medical evacuation to ammunition resupply.

"The deployment is long, but my Soldiers are in great spirits, thanks to all of the support we get from very generous people back home," she said.

Most recently, Mr. Phillip Jones from Raleigh, N.C., has been sending packages

to 1st Lt. Broyer and her team through Fort Bragg, N.C.'s, Adopt-a-Soldier program.

"About once every two weeks Mr. Jones sends us a few packages that include items such as fine cigars and cookies," she said. "My Soldiers always get excited when they see me walk into the hangar with one of those boxes. Mr. Jones has been very generous and always sends enough for the entire platoon."

Although the Soldiers receive care packages from family and friends, Mr. Jones's packages are doubly special, 1st Lt. Broyer said.

"It really means a lot when someone we don't even know sends gifts. I don't know a lot about Mr. Jones, other than he's an extremely generous man who cares about deployed Soldiers," she added.

The Adopt-a-Soldier program at Fort Bragg began in December 2003 when a high school friend of then-82nd Airborne Division commander Maj. Gen.

Charles Swannack attended his assumption-of-command ceremony and asked what she could do to support the post's Soldiers, said Ms. Vicky Lee of the Fort Bragg Directorate of Plans, Training and Mobilization. Ms. Lee is now responsible for administering the program that has resulted in the "adoption" of more than 1,800 Fort Bragg Soldiers.

Today, some 200 Soldiers are on a waiting list to be "adopted," she said.

"The program gives the civilian community an opportunity to show its support for deployed Soldiers on an individual basis," said Ms. Lee. The "adoption" involves sending letters and packages for the duration of the Soldier's deployment, usually 12 to 15 months, and it's not limited to supporters from the Fayetteville-Fort Bragg area.

Fayetteville fourth-grade teacher Ms. Beth Rogers "developed the Adopt-a-Soldier program into something above and



dier




▲ The arrival of an Adopt-a-Soldier package is always a cause for celebration among those deployed in Iraq and Afghanistan.

beyond care packages and letters,” Ms. Lee said. “She’s worked with representatives of the American Legion to adopt Soldiers in an aviation unit and has had flags presented to various schools.”

Before the opening of the current school year, the Cumberland County School System, of which Fayetteville is a part, advertised the Adopt-A-Soldier program county-wide, Ms. Lee said.

Most people try to send a letter once a week and a care package once a month. It usually takes at least 7 to 10 days for a letter to reach the Soldier, and 10 to 14 days for packages to arrive, Ms. Lee said.

Sponsors must fill out a customs form for each care package they send, listing its contents, weight and estimated cost of items sent.

Priority mail “military kits” can be obtained through the Expedited Package Supply Center by calling (800) 610-8734 to receive boxes, envelopes, tape and customs forms. The “flat-rate” boxes included in the kit will allow a sponsor to send whatever fits into the box, regardless of its weight, for a flat fee of \$8.95, Ms. Lee said. 

The following is a list of items requested by Soldiers in Iraq and Afghanistan:

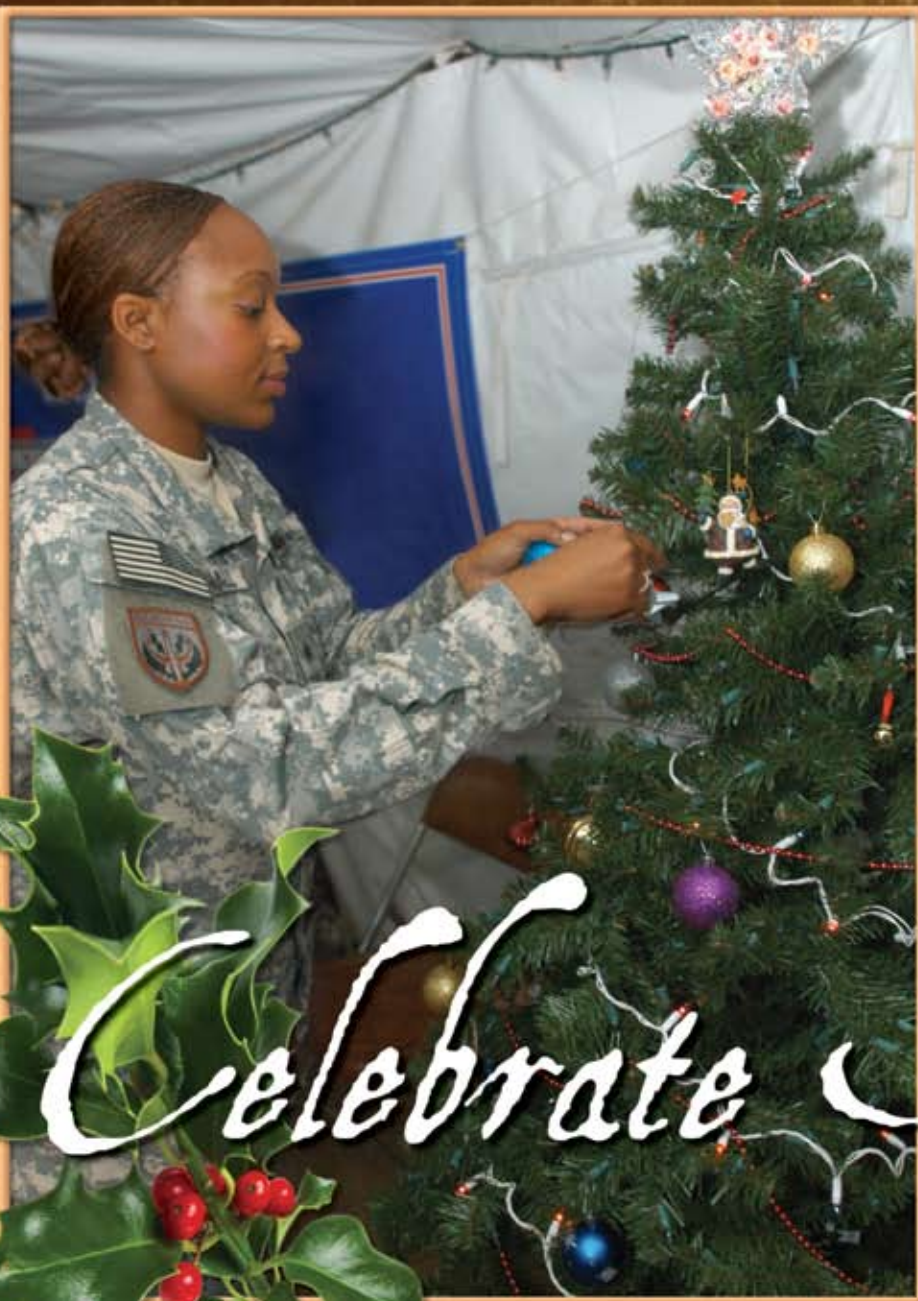
- | | | |
|-----------------------------|------------------------|----------------------|
| AA batteries | Hard candy | Shampoo |
| Air freshener | Ink pens | Shaving cream |
| Antibacterial gel | Insoles | Shower puffs |
| Baby wipes | Instant soup | Small packs of fruit |
| Beef jerky | Lip balm | Soap |
| Black socks | Lollipops | Sunflower seeds |
| Blank postcards | Magazines | Sunscreen |
| Board games | Mints | Sweetened Kool-Aid |
| Body powder | Mouth sprays | Tissues |
| Books | Nasal spray | Toilet paper |
| Bug spray | Newspapers | Toothbrushes |
| Canned cheese | Paper (letter-writing) | Toothpaste |
| Cards (playing) | Paperback books | Trail mix |
| Chewing gum | Peanuts | Travel games |
| Chex mix | Pillows | Tums, Immodium |
| Chips | Popcorn | Twizzlers |
| Cigarettes | Pop Tarts | Tylenol, Advil |
| Cigars | Pretzels | Velcro |
| Contact solution | Protein bars | Video games |
| Cotton balls | Protein powder/shakes | Vitamins |
| Crackers | Q-tips | |
| Crossword puzzles | Ravioli (pop-top cans) | |
| Dental floss | Sanitizer napkins | |
| Deodorant | | |
| Disposable cameras | | |
| Disposable razors | | |
| DVD movies | | |
| Envelopes | | |
| Eye drops | | |
| Feminine-hygiene products | | |
| Fly swatters | | |
| Foot powder | | |
| Gallon-size resealable bags | | |
| Granola bars | | |
| Hand sanitizer | | |

— Heike Hasenauer

INTERESTED IN ADOPTING A DEPLOYED SOLDIER?

Contact Ms. Lee at
(915)-396-5401
or e-mail her at
Vicky.Lee@us.army.mil
for more information.





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No matter how you celebrate during this
holiday season, celebrate safely.



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<https://crc.army.mil>

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Uniform and Ribbons poster, Jan at page 9.
A Fort Ahead, Jan 40.
Army Earth Day, Apr at page 9.

Legal Forum

Your Legal Daily Minimum Requirements, Feb 47.
Reverse Mortgages, Jun 44.
Home Financing, Aug 32.

Army Imperatives

Visiting the Troops, Jul 4. Army Chief of Staff Gen. George W. Casey Jr. has been on the road, gathering input from Soldiers and talking about the Army's seven initiatives.
Army Commissions a New Generation of Officers, Aug 4. President Bush and Army Chief of Staff Gen. George W. Casey Jr. honor newly minted second lieutenants.
Expanding Fort Bliss, Aug 18. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is leading a \$2.6 million expansion of the Texas post.

Careers

Calling for Special Agents, Aug 40. The U.S. Army Criminal Investigation Command, commonly known as CID, is looking for Soldiers who want to become special agents.

Competitions

Bragging About Best Ranger, July 6. Ranger-qualified Soldiers from throughout the Army gathered at Fort Benning, Ga., to vie for the ultimate accolade.
MP Challenge, Aug 34. Military police Soldiers gathered at Fort Leonard Wood, Mo., for the Warfighter MP Team Competition.
Earning the EFMB, Sep 32. Nearly 300 Army, Navy and Air Force medical personnel vied for the prestigious Expert Field Medical Badge at Grafenwöhr, Germany.
Ten-miler Tune-up, Sep cover 3.
Friendship Through Sport, Oct 28. Thousands of military athletes from 128 nations met at the Conseil International du Sport Militaire's Military World Games in India.
Building an All-American Team, Dec 18. America's top high-school football players battle it out in the Army All-American Bowl.

Environment

Preserving Training Grounds, Feb 38. The Army's Compatible Use Buffer program helps preserve training areas for future Soldiers.
Smarter Building Recycling, Apr 34. Organizations Armywide are finding that reuse of materials from demolished structures is good for both the planet and the bottom line.
What You Can Do Earth Day, Apr Cover 3.
Playing Cards to Preserve Antiquities, Sep 28. Cards bearing pictures of protected sites are part of a larger effort to protect Iraq's cultural heritage.
Holding Ground at Graf, Oct 35. Environmental planning and restoration efforts at the Army's training center in Grafenwöhr, Germany, will ensure that Stryker units will be able to train at the Bavarian post for years to come.
Protecting the Western Toad, Dec 37.

Fort Lewis, Wash., is helping to protect an endangered species.

Focus on People

Capt. Scott Smiley is a "Wounded Warrior," Feb 48.
Recognition of Valor, Apr 14. More than 40 years after the event, Lt. Col. Bruce Crandall has been awarded the Medal of Honor for his actions during a key battle in Vietnam.
Capturing Combat on Canvas, Jun 22. Through his drawings and paintings, an Army Reserve artist helps document the war in Iraq.
Emeril Cooks up Soldier Recipes, Jun 36. Savory aromas fill the air when famed chef Emeril Lagasse whips up delicious meals based on servicemembers' recipes.
On Being a "Brat," Sep 34. A new film chronicles the challenges and joys of growing up as the child of a servicemember.
An Aide for All Seasons, Sep 38. Preparing gourmet meals is just part of the job for Sgt. 1st Class Andre Rush.
A Tribute to the Fallen, Oct 37. A young National Guard Soldier has turned his 2004 Infiniti G35 into a high-performance work of art to honor three comrades killed in Iraq.
Remembering Sad Sack, Nov 12. Born during World War II, Sgt. George Baker's comic character took a humorous and insightful look at Army life.
Bridge Helper, Nov 15. An Army Reserve medical officer and his wife — a registered nurse — were among the aid givers treating victims of the Minneapolis bridge disaster.
G.I. Jill, Dec 4. Sgt. Jill Stevens is both a Soldier and a potential Miss America.
Portraits of the Fallen, Dec 24. Ms. Kaziah Hancock presents portraits of fallen Soldiers to their families.

Focus on Korea
Duty on the Last Communist Frontier, Feb 12. Soldiers continue to guard freedom's frontier in Korea.
Duty on the DMZ, Feb 20. U.S. and South Korean soldiers come face-to-face with a potential enemy along the Demilitarized Zone.
Special Ops in Korea, Feb 24. If war breaks out on the Korean peninsula, special-operations Soldiers will play a major combat role.
Big Changes for Camp Humphreys, Oct 30. Scheduled to be the home of U.S. Forces, Korea, by 2012, the once-small post is undergoing one of the largest transformations in Army history.

Guard and Reserve
Transitioning to the Guard or Reserve, Jan 16.
Clearing the Roads, Jun 14. National Guard engineers attached to an Army Reserve brigade are using specialized vehicles to clear IEDs from vital Iraqi roadways.
Disaster at Eagle Pass, Sep 16. When a Texas town was ravaged by a killer storm, Guard Soldiers were among the first to respond.
The Guard Looks to Africa, Sep 18. National Guard partnerships with African nations help strengthen security throughout the region.
Building Partnerships in the Balkans, Sep 20. The Guard's African partnerships are patterned on those already proving successful in Europe.
Down-Home Talkin' in Iraq, Sep 22. Members of a Kentucky Guard unit use both social and humanitarian skills to foster peace.

Soldiers

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Training to Defeat IEDs, Nov 4. The Army Reserve's Task Force Mustang is helping to teach deploying units how to deal with improvised explosive devices.
The Guard Keeps Them Flying, Nov 7. A unique National Guard aviation maintenance unit keeps Army helicopters flying in Iraq and Afghanistan.
Rainier Rescuers, Dec 12. An Army Reserve aviation unit conducts high-altitude mountain rescues.
Commissioning the Smalls, Dec 16. A new Army Reserve vessel honors a famed African-American.
Training for Mountain Warfare, Dec 34. The Reserve-run Army Mountain Warfare School in Vermont teaches students from throughout the U.S. military.

Health, Well-being & Safety

Aiding Wounded Warriors, Feb 8. The Army Wounded Warrior program helps Soldiers and families cope with life-changing injuries.
Taming the Crotch Rockets, Apr 40. Fast and flashy, motorcycles are also a leading cause of death and injury for Soldiers. Here's what the Army is doing to reduce the risks.
Preventing Soldier Suicide, Apr 42. New initiatives are aimed at eliminating the causes of this sad and tragic act.
Focus on ... Walter Reed, May 3. We take a close look at what the Army's largest medical center is doing to improve healthcare for Soldiers.
Good News: Medical Holdover, Jul 40. At Fort Carson, Colo., an innovative program is helping wounded and injured reserve-component Soldiers tackle stubborn medical problems.
Eliminating the Bite, Aug 23. Soldiers and Army Civilians are helping lead the battle to eliminate disease-carrying mosquitoes.
Battling PTSD, Aug 28. Finding effective ways to treat Post Traumatic Stress Disorder is an Army priority.
Understanding TBI, Sep 29. Researchers are working to better understand the causes of, and treatments for, traumatic brain injury.
Therapeutic Horsemanship, Sep 30. Horses are helping Soldiers with disabilities strengthen their bodies and relax their minds.
Combating PTSD, Oct 20. A new therapy for battling Post Traumatic Stress Disorder — using virtual reality — is being fine-tuned at Madigan Army Medical Center at Fort Lewis, Wash.
Cold Weather Driving Tips, Nov 30. Avoid a damaging run-in with "Old Man Winter" by following a few simple winter driving rules.
Diving to Strength, Nov 33. An innovative physical-therapy program is giving wounded Soldiers new freedom and motivation.
Adopt a Soldier, Dec 11. People nationwide are sending "care packages" to deployed troops.

History, Traditions & Holidays
Armor History at Fort Knox, Apr 24. Home to the Army's armored forces since before World War II, the Kentucky post continues to be the armor center of excellence.
Remembering the Fallen, May 18. The sound of "Taps" will echo worldwide thanks to a unique partnership.
Where Valor Rests, May 24. A new book uses more than 200 images to illustrate the four seasons at Arlington National Cemetery.
Remembering the "Yankee Samurai," May 38. American-born Soldiers of

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Japanese ancestry played a vital role in World War II.
Baseball History at Fort Sill, May 48. Soldiers in period uniforms commemorate a 19th-century competition at the Oklahoma post.
Christmas Notes, Dec 21. We take a fond look at the holiday's origins and traditions.

Iraq and Afghanistan

The Iraqi Army — Moving Forward, Apr 8. Better training, better equipment and a new attitude of confidence are improving Iraq's army.
Voice for the Victims, May 20. Corps of Engineers forensic teams excavating mass graves in Iraq are helping bring to justice those who committed crimes against humanity.
Making a Difference in Kirkuk, Jun 4. The 3rd Infantry BCT is training members of Iraq's security forces to meet their nation's needs.
Building Relationships in Iraq, Jun 12. Army civil-affairs units play an important role in helping lay the foundations for a free and independent Iraq.
Supporting Iraq's ERUs, Jun 16. Soldiers based at Camp Ramadi are supporting the 2,000 Iraqi members of Al Anbar province's emergency-response units.
Chaplains Meet in Iraq, Jul 15. Army chaplains in Iraq met at Camp Victory to discuss programs, issues and the challenges they face.
Air Resupply, Jul 28. Army riggers in Iraq are spearheading an effort to use airdrops to keep supply convoys off the roads and away from IEDs.
Preventing Convoy Breakdowns, Jul 36. Soldiers at FOB Trebil ensure that civilian truckers are ready for the long haul through Iraq.
Training for Rapid Rescues, Sep 4. Realistic training helps keep 1st Cavalry Division Soldiers ready to rescue downed aircrews.
Introducing New Strykers to Combat, Sep 6. When the 4th Battalion, 9th Infantry, deployed to Iraq, the Mobile Gun System went too.
Bolstering Stryker Skills, Sep 7. The Army's newest Stryker brigade intensifies its training in preparation for deployment to Iraq.
No Impossible Missions, Sep 8. Members of a vital U.S. Central Command unit help keep supplies moving to the combat zone.
Underwater Engineers, Sep 10. Soldiers of a Hawaii-based Army dive team tackle a range of submerged missions.
A Clinic for Karkh, Sep 14. The 1st Squadron, 14th Cavalry, helps bring quality medical care to a small Iraqi village.
Pushing Out Afghan Poppies, Nov 8. Soldiers are helping to combat Afghanistan-grown opium by teaching local farmers how to grow crops other than poppies.
"Vacation" in Kansas, Nov 10. A group of Afghan police and soldiers got a close-up look at America — and the Army — during a working visit to Fort Riley.
A Heartfelt Memorial, Nov 28. The Army Reserve's 88th Regional Readiness Command establishes a memorial honoring all those the unit has lost.

Operations and Missions
Munitionmaker, Mar 16. McAlester Army Ammunition Plant is the Defense Department's premier producer of bombs, and the nation's largest facility for storing and shipping munitions.
Aiming for Excellence, Mar 24. Located halfway between Hawaii and Australia, Kwajalein Atoll is home to the nation's leading ballistic missile

defense test site.

Eliminating Chemical Weapons, Mar 36. The U.S. Army Chemical Materiel Agency is continuing to eliminate the nation's stockpile.

A Unique Partnership, May 30. Two female medics provided combat medical care for an Afghan infantry unit.

Honoring the Last MASH, Jun 18. The Army's sole remaining mobile Army surgical hospital cases its colors for the last time.

Making a Difference in Central America, Jul 20. Two U.S. joint task forces undertake a range of humanitarian programs south of the border.

Lessons in Gender Operations, Jul 32. Eleven female Yemeni police officers got an in-depth look at how U.S. military and law-enforcement agencies integrate women into tactical operations.

Goodbye to OPBAT, Aug 16. Army aviators fly their final missions in support of a long-running and successful counterdrug program.

Old Guard in Djibouti, Aug 20. Members of the 3rd U.S. Infantry (The Old Guard) deployed to the Horn of Africa to help provide force protection for civil-affairs missions.

Training Salvadorans for Iraq, Dec 32. Soldiers from Joint Task Force Bravo help prepare coalition troops for combat.

The U.S. Army Field Band, Dec 40. On the road with one of the nation's premier musical organizations.

Recruiting and Retention

Referral Bonus Update, Apr 48. Here are the facts on the \$2K Bonus program.

Recruiters' Backup, May 16. Soldiers in this special program share their real-world experiences with potential recruits.

\$2K Army Referral Bonus, May cover 3. **America's Xbox Army**, Oct 4. "True Soldiers," the latest evolution of the hugely popular Army-sponsored video game "America's Army," is introducing players to a whole new level of challenges and accomplishments.

Schools and Training

Practicing an Immediate Response, Feb 28. U.S. and Bulgarian and Romanian troops undertake realistic joint training.

Exercise in Precision, Mar 32. Soldiers and howitzers descend from above when 82nd Airborne Division artillerymen jump into a training exercise.

Beefing Up Language Skills, Apr 20. The Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center is providing the nation with highly trained experts in a variety of critical languages.

BCT: As Strong as Ever, May 4. Excellent drill sergeants and tough, realistic training are still the essential ingredients for turning civilians into world-class Soldiers.

Training for the Fight, May 11. U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command is using lessons learned in combat to fine-tune BCT.

Learning the Urban Fight, May 13. Comprehensive MOUT training is helping prepare new Soldiers for the conditions they'll face in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Vying for "Gunga Din", May 28. Named after Rudyard Kipling's famous poem, this event proves who's the "better man."

Exercise Granite Triangle, Jun 28. An exercise at Fort Pickett, Va., brought together Soldiers, Sailors, Marines and Canadian troops for some tough and realistic training.

Training in Ethiopia, Jun 30. Members of the 1st Battalion, 294th Infantry Regiment, help Ethiopian NCOs learn how to lead.

Preparing for Disaster, Jun 38. The Army component of U.S. Northern

Command — Army North — is prepared to assist civil authorities in responding to any type of calamity.

Preparing Chaplains for Combat, Jul 12. In response to conditions encountered by chaplains in Iraq, the 2nd Infantry Division has created an innovative pre-deployment training course.

CGSC Today, Jul 16. The U.S. Army Command and General Staff College continues to educate and develop military leaders.

A New Home for CGSC, Jul 19. New facilities enhance the capabilities of the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College.

Preparing for Hurricane Season, Aug 6. A simulated hurricane helped the Army and other concerned agencies test and refine their emergency-response plans.

Training Recruiters, Nov 20. The U.S. Army Recruiting and Retention School at Fort Jackson, S.C., is where today's recruiters learn the tools and techniques of their trade.

Soldier Issues

Marriage in the Military, Feb 32. Innovative programs improve the odds of marital survival for Army couples.

Protecting Soldiers' Security, Feb 36. A special team of Soldiers is helping ensure that Army Web sites don't compromise security.

A Home For Heroes, Apr 30. The Armed Forces Retirement Home offers eligible veterans the comfort and support they deserve.

Saluting Soldiers' Supporters, Jul 48. Freedom Team Salute allows Soldiers to honor people within their personal support networks.

Technology

Launching the JHSV, Aug 10. The Army, Navy and Marine Corps are preparing to introduce a high-speed vessel that will transform 21st-century military logistics operations.

Blazing a Trail to New Technology, Oct 8. Maj. Gen. Roger A. Nadeau talks about the goals, programs and successes of the Army Research, Development and Engineering Command at Aberdeen Proving Ground, Md.

Developing New Life-Saving Technologies, Oct 12. ... and we take a closer look at some of RDECOM's innovative, cutting-edge technologies.

AMC Technologies, Oct 22. Because Soldiers need more than just beans and bullets to survive and succeed in Afghanistan and Iraq, the U.S. Army Materiel Command is constantly developing new vehicles and technologies.

This is Our Army
A glimpse into the lives of Soldiers and Families Armywide, Mar 44.

War on Terror
Gitmo Guardians, Mar 8. Camp America is home to the men and women of Joint Task Force-Guantanamo, and to more than 400 war-on-terror-related enemy combatants.

Ensuring Regional Security, Aug 27. Twenty-one nations attended the recent Third Army/U.S. Army Central Land Forces Symposium.

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